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**MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES PLAN FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO EAST END OF
CHICAGO'S RIVERWALK**

*Improvements to Sections East of Michigan Avenue to Lake Shore Drive Will Build On the
Success of the Riverwalk West of State Street*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today announced plans to improve the east end of the Chicago Riverwalk. These improvements are part of ongoing efforts to build upon the success of the Riverwalk and further enhance visitors' experience from Michigan Avenue to Lake Shore Drive.

"The Riverwalk changed the way people interact with the Chicago River, transforming the waterfront into the city's next recreational frontier," Mayor Emanuel said. "The riverfront investments we are making will make the entire 1.25 mile stretch inviting to residents and visitors, increase recreational opportunities and continue to promote economic growth."

The City will improve older sections of the Riverwalk east of Michigan Avenue to help create even more opportunities for residents and visitors to interact with and enjoy the Chicago River. Improvements will include changes to the path to re-orientate visitor's experience with the river, recreation areas, children's play area, public art and improved landscaping.

The plan focuses on access points or gateways along the east end, including:

- **Ellen Lanyon Gateway, LSD entrance:** improved landscaping, outdoor public seating, viewing area to showcase existing Ellen Lanyon murals within gateway structure.
- **Entrance at Field Drive:** pedestrian connection from Lake Shore Drive east, children's play area, public art space, improved landscaping, outdoor public seating, proposed submarine memorial
- **Columbus Drive Plaza:** improved landscaping and drainage, outdoor public seating, new elevator from Wanda Vista development
- **Michigan Avenue East Plaza:** access point from Michigan Avenue to showcase new gateway structure, improved plaza area with enhanced landscaping, outdoor furniture to provide visual screen for lower Wacker Drive. Immediate

improvements to be made by Chicago's First Lady Cruises to their sight, including new signage, re-cladding exterior of ticket offices and improved queuing on the path

- **Michigan Avenue West Plaza:** reconfigure existing plaza with improved landscaping and public seating to make plaza easier to navigate and more inviting to the public
- **Michigan Avenue Market:** west of Michigan Avenue Plaza, city planning to develop market to complement current concessions program to highlight neighborhood businesses

"2FM is proud to maintain the Riverwalk as part of Mayor Emanuel's effort to build on Daniel Burnham's vision for Chicago," Department of Fleet and Facility Management (2FM) Commissioner David Reynolds said. "Further developing the east end will allow for even more ways for residents and visitors to embrace Chicago's beauty and culture.

The City has identified \$10 million in funding towards these improvements and anticipates completion of the project by 2020. More immediate improvements will be privately funded by Chicago's First Lady Cruises and other vendors, including Northman, Island Party Hut and Urban Kayaks, per the contracts approved by City Council in February. Wanda Vista is funding construction of the elevator at Columbus Plaza, which is expected to be completed in 2019.

"Over the last 83 years, our family business has provided tourists and local families a front row seat to the city's breathtaking skyline," Holly Agra, President of Chicago's First Lady Cruises said. "We understand the Riverwalk is one of our City's greatest assets and our family will continue to invest in keeping our sector fresh and updated, with increased numbers of seating areas and enhanced landscaping to ensure safety and enjoyment for all."

To complement the current Chicago Riverwalk concessions program, 2FM is working with Aldermen and the Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) to develop an area for a marketplace to highlight minority-owned, Chicago-based businesses. This concessions program will expose Riverwalk visitors to small businesses reflective of the rich cultural diversity of the City and allow Chicago-based businesses the opportunity to promote their neighborhood locations. An RFQ will be released later this summer. The market is anticipated to start in spring of 2019.

The award-winning Chicago Riverwalk is a key component of Building on Burnham, Mayor Emanuel's comprehensive plan to invest in the Lakefront, the Chicago River, natural areas and recreational opportunities in neighborhoods across the city. Under the Building on Burnham plan, 985 acres of parks have been acquired and 5.5 miles of waterfront access have been developed with continued plans to acquire additional parkland and further develop the waterfront in the coming years.

Since 2011, the Chicago River has been transformed into the city's next recreational park, with vast opportunities for residents and visitors to access and enjoy the river at almost every mile. The Chicago Riverwalk, which covers 1.25-miles through the heart of the city, was completed in 2016 and continues to offer new and improved ways to enjoy Chicago's waterfronts and architecture.

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